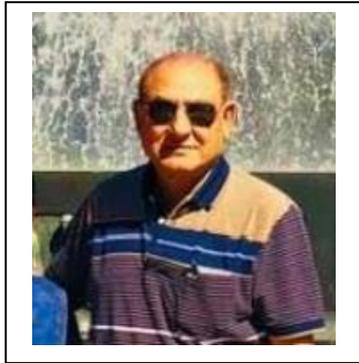


A SYSTEM DESIGNER, AN INNOVATOR

Satish Sood MCEAR – A/38

Is there anything an Artificer can't do?



Life is full of uncertainties. It is said that destiny guides you. But this can't be a gospel truth. Yes, destiny may offer an opportunity. Understanding it and making gold of it is individual's mind-set. Tracing the track records of our successful partners confirms this. Partner Satish Sood, EAR A/38, who is one such example who grabbed an opportunity to become a successful system designer. It was otherwise a stable life for him. But for Satish something else was awaiting.

Born in a small village in Kangra where he could get primary education only up to 4th grade and had to trek 22 km. up and down every day for further schooling through the hilly terrain, it was a tough task. Luckily, from 6th to 10th, a hostel facility could be found. It was a remote under developed area, no roads, no bridges over rivers and no electricity. He saw an electric bulb first time during inter school sports completion at Dharamsala, when he was in 10thstd. His elder brother had already joined navy as a Shipwright Artificer apprentice by then and Satish was very impressed by the way he posed himself. It was but natural for Satish to follow his track. He qualified EAR and as a 5th class in 1965 and joined fleet, only to realise that he is a hopelessly seasick case. All efforts by naval doctors failed, and in spite of trying his best, he could never get over it. On alongside berth, he was a lion at work and most admired EAR. More than a maintainer, he was innovator. He progressed through career and become MCEAR in time but could hardly complete his term with navy and at first opportunity after eight and half years' service got absorbed in Custom Marines as Engineer-Marine. It was a shore job and his first appointment was at very remote place near Surat in Gujrat. Soon he realised that it was a day to day a routine job with no scope for his skills and nothing big to aspire. But, because it was a shore job, he was happy for some time, though with a restless mind. Alternative was to get in General Industry and explore professional skill or get on own. His liking and specialisation were automated control systems.

This is where he found an opportunity to enter in industrial sector to design and develop control systems, which proved highly successful and economical. When he started, there were no funds, no house of own and no place to start the work. Customer's premise was to be his experiment laboratory. He concentrated his focus looking for Specialised Automated control systems lying non-operational either for want of detailed knowhow or non-availability of spares. Through one of his workshop employees, a Gujarati native, he came to know of one.

There was one German make Centring machine in one of the cloth mills, non-operational for long time. Many repair guys had tried hand on it and surrendered. There was no support from original equipment manufacturers as most of them had either closed down or shifted to other

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productions. Naturally, none of the original control components were available. Many people having tried their hand on it, even the circuitry had been tampered and could not be traced correctly. The owners were desperate. At this juncture, Satish offered to make an alternate indigenously designed control for existing machines, which would work as good as the original. May be out of desperation, the offer was accepted on term that they will provide all the modification material as per requirement but will not pay repair charges if the system did not work to their entire satisfaction. At that stage no one had any confidence of success except Satish. This was a very big achievement for him and an excellent push for his entrepreneurship adventure. Nothing succeeds success. That was his first kill as an entrepreneur. No capital involved, no workshop space and no employees.

The word spread around and the next one was a Form, Feel & Seal (FFS) sachets machine. Identical story. In one of the packaging industries, one of their machines was non-operational for quite some time that affected the production. By Analysis of the controls, it got revealed that the main processor board was faulty, and the control chain needed few more components. None of these spares were available from German O.E.M. as the firm had discontinued the production of these machines long ago. So, this was the Catch 22 situation. Owners permitted redesigning whole of the control system using indigenous components. Machine became operational. The results were so impressive that the management offered the ancillary production for their products to him. It suited him the most since no finance of him was involved. Then onwards there was no looking back for him. The word of success soon spread like a wild fire in the automation industry. Partner Satish Sood started getting calls and he too became choosy about picking new jobs. He started taking only the systems indigenisation offers.

By his improved financial position out of the job done so far, he was in position to setup a small workshop and manufacturing unit near Surat. His progress has been exponential since then. He always has sizable work of choice at hand with no end in sight, since there are many old industries around Surat, and in Gujrat. He has also established himself in neighbouring Maharashtra. Many of these industries are also under his AMC contract for their automation systems.

He firmly believes in dedicated pursuance of desired goal, and it always pays. He always feels proud of having been an Artificer and has inculcated work culture from those days. He is always grateful to senior artificers in navy for their early guidance and moulding his mind.